

ORIGIN/ACTION		
ALA-10		
RM/R	REP	AF
1		
ARA	EUR	FE
NEA	CU	INR
E	P	IO
L	OFF	AID
GPM	SY	S/A
AGR	COM	FRB
INT	LAB	TAR
TR	XMB	AIR
ARMY	CIA	NAVY
OSD	USIA	NSA
	FBI	NSC

AIRGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

A-331

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Pol 23 GUAT
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TO : Department of State

INFO : Amembassies MANAGUA, SAN JOSE, SAN SALVADOR, TEGUCIGALPA, PANAMA, USCINCSO FOR POLAD

FROM : Amembassy GUATEMALA

SUBJECT : Terrorism - Its Geographic Distribution

REF :

1. Attached is a graph showing the frequency and distribution of terrorist activity since December 1966. (A-143 analyzed the trend through December 1967.)

2. The facts of the situation during the past 2 months are self-explanatory. In January there was a sharp increase of terrorism and counterterrorism and in February an almost equally sharp drop, bringing the total back down to the December level. The reasons for the gyrations are much harder to come by. The most plausible answer is simply that such swings are inevitable. The insurgents lie low for an indeterminate period planning an offensive. Then they expose themselves during the offensive. This galvanizes the security forces into action not only because the insurgents are vulnerable but also in retaliation and for public relations motives; then the insurgents go back into hiding preparing for another offensive. So long as the relative strengths and deployments of the GOG security forces and the insurgents remain essentially the same, this roller coaster pattern of activity will probably stay with us.

3. Even if the balance of power were to swing significantly in favor of one or another side, wide periodic swings could be expected but at different levels of magnitude. If the security forces succeed in dealing the urban insurgents the same type of blow they dealt the guerrilla bands in Izabal/Zacapa and at the same time prevent the insurgents from establishing new rural bases, clearly the level of terrorism and counterterrorism would fall off. Even under the most optimistic set of assumptions, however, the existence of a hard core insurgent cadre will be a fact of Guatemalan life for the foreseeable future. And even a vastly reduced hard core insurgent group would have the capability of mounting sporadic offensives which would in all probability spark a reaction on the part of the security forces

Enclosure: Graph

FORM 4-62 DS-323

CONFIDENTIAL DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/US

Drafted by:

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Clearances:

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REVIEWED BY: DATE
POL:MDSmith

REASON(S)

ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS

DECLASSIFIED/RELEASABLE

RELEASE DENIED

PA OR FOI EXEMPTIONS

1968 MAR 11 AM 9 42

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which would result in a marked increase in the general level of violence albeit at a lower level of intensity than has existed in recent months.

4. On the other hand, if the insurgents succeed in establishing more secure bases of operation for their urban resistance units and/or are able to reestablish viable bases in the field, similar wide swings would be probable, but in this case on an increased scale.

MEIN



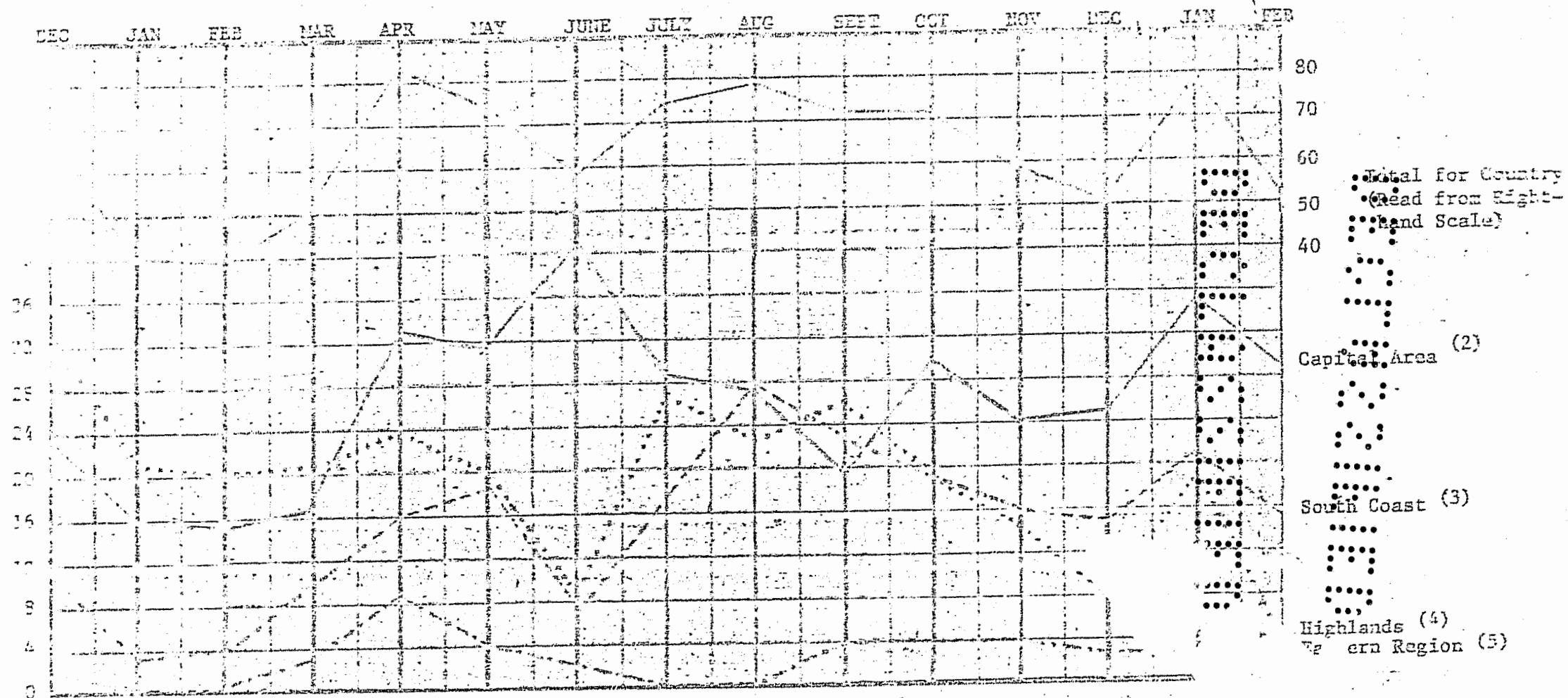
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Enclosure /

MONTHLY FREQUENCY OF TERRORIST RELATED INCIDENTS BY REGION
DECEMBER 1966 - FEBRUARY 1968



- For purposes of this graph both acts of violence, such as shootings, bombings, etc., and assassinations are counted as incidents.
- Capital Area includes Departments: Sacatepequez, Guatemala.
- South Coast includes Departments: San Marcos, Quezaltenango, Retalhuleu, Suchitepequez, Escuintla, Santa Rosa.
- Highlands includes Departments: Totonicapan, Chimaltenango, Huehuetenango, El Quiche, Baja Verapaz, Alta Verapaz, Solola.
- Eastern Region includes Departments: Jutiapa, Jalapa, El Progreso, Zacapa, Chiquimula, Izabal.

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